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JANUARY 28, 1775.

Numb. I.

Philadelphia: Printed by JAMES HUMPHREYS, junr. in Front-street, at the Corner of Black-horse Alley:—Where Essays, Articles of News, Advertisements, &c. are gratefully received and impartially inserted.

THE PRINTER presents his most respectful compliments to his kind and benevolent fellow Citizens, and returns them his sincere thanks and acknowledgements for the candour with which they received his Proposals, and the cheerfulness with which they subscribed to this Paper. He can only now, repeat the assurances he has already given that it shall be conducted with the utmost Freedom and Impartiality; and that no Pieces shall be refused a place in the Pennsylvania Ledger, that are written with decency, and void of all reflections upon particular persons, or religious societies. The Liberty of the Press he considers as one of the most valuable blessings of the government under which he lives. The abuse of this liberty he hopes never to be charged with; and will, therefore, endeavour to preserve his paper unstained by the Ink of Malice, Party-rage, Immorality or Irreligion.

To the Printer of the PENNSYLVANIA LEDGER.

SEQUESTERED from the busy world, and drawing towards the decline of life, I have for some time past remained a silent though not insensible spectator of human transactions. Once indeed I builied upon the political stage, and my pen was employed, and my voice was exerted in what I then deemed the cause of Liberty and Virtue. Young though I was at that period, and little hackneyed in the ways of men, I soon discovered such a thirst for victory in myself, as well as in those with whom I was connected, and such an earnest desire of seeing our adversaries at our feet, as convinced me that I had gone too far, and made me tremble for the success of those very men and measures, to which, from principle, I had attached myself. Matters, however, were unexpectedly compromised; and both parties retired from the field of contest, without the power of triumph on either side.

As a man of business, and as a political writer, I have a long time been forgotten, and 'tis my earnest desire to be so still. I am happy in all the endearments of domestic life. My conversation extends little further than the circle of my family and friends, in whose hearts I wish to live. My breast glows with the most benevolent wishes for the present as well as future happiness of mankind; and I am daily looking forward with more and more tranquillity and satisfaction, to a world where love reigns without the least alloy of selfishness or dissimulation.

I should not, therefore, at this time of life, and in such a temper of mind, have stepped forth from my beloved retreat, had I not been solicited by a motive, to which, I hope, my heart will never prove reluctant. Without the spirit of prophecy, I can easily foresee that unnumbered calamities must burst upon these American Colonies, unless the present differences betwixt them and the Parent Land be speedily adjusted: And though I can scarcely expect, that my feeble voice should be heard, amid the tumult of party on both sides, yet I cannot forbear, in the spirit of meekness and love, to give my private and unbiassed sentiments upon the present state of affairs: What I have to say, will be comprized in a few sentences, and expressed with that plainness and simplicity which are best adapted to the subject, and best becoming my advanced period of life.

I have ever considered, and still wish to consider Great-Britain a her colonies, under the idea of a parent and her children; and without entering into distinctions, which were unknown amongst us twenty years ago, I look upon it as the duty of Great

Britain, in every branch of her legislature, to give her colonies that countenance and protection, to which, as children, they are most certainly entitled. By countenance and protection, I mean not only that which relates to the defence of person and property against our common enemies abroad, but likewise to the preservation of our essential rights and liberties, as her children and subjects at home. Upon this principle, parental affection on her part, and filial obedience on ours, become indispensable duties, against the violation of which, both of us should be perpetually upon our guard. And if any little appearances of severity on one side, or petulance on the other, should now and then happen, they should be sustained with that mutual forbearance, which so dear and intimate a connexion demands. Nay, I will go further, and venture to assert, that great grievances, if not to be redressed in a friendly and amicable way, ought to be borne, rather than risk the dreadful consequences of an open rupture.

But suppose the parent, jealous of the increasing opulence and splendor of her children, and unreasonably suspicious of their aiming at independency, should not only lay such restrictions upon their trade, as would check the spirit of industry, by shutting up the channels of wealth, but should likewise enact and carry into execution such laws, as would deprive them of that security of person and property, to which, as her offspring, their birthright is indispensible; in what manner are these children to act, so as to preserve this birthright, and yet not violate the filial obedience they owe to the parent? This is the grand question, upon the decision of which, the future happiness or misery of Americans must depend—and sincerely sorry I am, that the conduct of Great-Britain hath reduced us to the necessity of answering it in some way or other.

Upon the principles already laid down, and according to the idea under which I would chuse to consider the connexion betwixt the two countries, my answer would be this:—

That with respect to the inconveniencies or grievances we may be supposed to sustain from the restrictions upon our trade, we have undoubtedly the remedy in our own hands. A non-consumption of the several articles to which duties are annexed, and a non-importation of such as are rather matters of luxury than necessity, would save us from the imputation of disobedience on the one hand, and on the other would bring us back to such a degree of moderation and simplicity in our mode of living, as would conduce both to the health of our bodies, and the improvement of our minds. Luxury is as great an enemy to the purity of the mind, as it is to the health of the body: And if we look back to the comparative innocence and simplicity of our former days, we shall be at no loss to discover the true source of our former peace and tranquillity. Self-denial, in the present case, therefore, would be the best political as well as moral virtue, that we could possibly exercise.

With respect to those grievous and oppressive acts which render the security of our persons and properties so very precarious, our mode of conduct should be prudent and delicate indeed. Every thing that has the least tendency to provoke and exasperate a misjudging parent should most studiously be avoided. Our petitions and remonstrances should be expressed and delivered with a manly firmness and fortitude, as far removed from an abject servility on the one hand, as from an unbecoming petulance and disrespect on the other. But above all, we should abstain from any thing, that looks like a Threat, and not suffer even the thought of an ARMED OPPOSITION to obtrude upon our minds.

How far petitions and respectful remonstrances might avail under the present circumstances is no difficult matter to determine, for if we may judge of their success with every branch of the British legislature (when legally and constitutionally presented) from what hath already happened with respect to many acts, that were deemed oppressive in the mother country, I think we may be very certain of obtaining redress—nay, I am assured from the best authority, that any representations drawn up and transmitted by the several colony legislatures would be favourably received, and attended to. The ma-

nifold inconveniencies and dangers attending any different mode of procedure, I may perhaps point out in a future paper.

EUGENIO.

CHARLESTOWN (South Carolina) Dec. 12. The CHARGE of the Honourable WILLIAM HENRY DRAYTON, Esquire; one of his Majesty's Justices of the Supreme Court, to the Grand Jury.

Gentlemen of the Grand Jury,

YOU are now met to discharge one of the most important Duties in Society; for you are assembled Arbiters of the Innocence or Guilt of such of your Fellow Citizens, who are so unfortunate, as to have afforded Occasion, however slight, for the Laws to take Cognizance of their Conduct.—You are authorized to pass Judgment in the first Instance, upon the apparently guilty wretch; and by your acquitting voice, you have power to shield apparent innocence from a malicious prosecution:—Such powers has the constitution of your country vested in you; powers! no less important than truly honourable, when exercised with a fearless integrity.

It is your indispensable duty, to endeavour to exercise these powers with propriety.—It is mine, concisely to point out to you, the line of your conduct. A conduct, which the venerable constitution of your Country intends, by protecting the innocent, and by delivering the guilty over to the course of Law, should operate to nourish in its native Vigour, even that constitution itself, from whose generous spirit, we have a title to call ourselves FREEMEN.—An appellation which peculiarly distinguishes the English subjects (those unfortunately disappointed fellow citizens in Quebec excepted) and ranks them above all the civilized nations of the Earth!

By as much as you prefer Freedom to Slavery, by so much ought you to prefer a generous death to servitude, and to hazard every thing to endeavour to maintain that rank which is so gloriously pre-eminent above all other nations. You ought to endeavour to preserve it, not only for its inestimable value; but from a Reverence to our Ancestors, from whom we received it, and a love to our Children to whom, we are bound by every consideration, to deliver down this Legacy—the most valuable that ever was or can be delivered to posterity.—It is compounded of the most generous civil Liberty which ever existed; and the sacred Christian Religion, released from the absurdities which are inculcated—the shackles which are imposed—the tortures which are inflicted—and the flames which are lighted, blown up and fed with blood by the Roman Catholic doctrines:—Doctrines which tend to establish a most cruel tyranny in Church and state; a tyranny under which all Europe groaned for many ages. And such are the distinguishing characters of this legacy, which, may God of his infinite goodness and mercy long preserve to us, and graciously continue to our posterity. But without our pious and unwearied endeavours to preserve these blessings, it is folly and presumption to hope for a continuance of them. Hence, in order to stimulate your exertions in favour of your Civil Liberties which protect your Religious Rights; instead of discouraging to you of the laws of other states, and comparing them to our own; allow me to tell you what your Civil Liberties are, and to charge you, which I do in the most solemn manner, to hold them dearer than your Lives.—A lesson and charge at all times proper from a Judge—but particularly so at this crisis, when America is in one general and generous commotion, touching this truly important point.

It is unnecessary for me to draw any other character of those liberties than, that great line by which they are distinguished;—and happy is it for the Subject that, these liberties can be marked in so easy, and in so distinguishing a manner. And this is the distinguishing character.—English People cannot be Taxed—nay, they cannot be bound by any law unless by their consent, expressed by themselves, or by their Representatives of their own election.—This Colony was settled by English Subjects—by a People from England herself—a People! who brought over with them—who planted in this Colony—and who transmitted to their Posterity, the invaluable Rights of Englishmen.—Rights! which no time, no contract, no climate can diminish.—Thus possessed of such Rights, it is of the